

GREAT MEETING

OF

ELECTORS OF THE BOROUGH OF HYTHE,

*Held in the TOWN HALL, Folkestone, Friday,
February 27, 1880.*

Speech of SIR EDWARD WATKIN, M.P.

DR. BATEMAN IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. HART read the notice convening the meeting.

The CHAIRMAN: At what I may call a preliminary meeting to those which took place a few days ago, which was attended by most of the leading Liberals in this town, and also by our staunch friends from Hythe and Sandgate, and which, I think, pretty fairly represented the Liberal feeling of this Borough, the following resolutions were passed:—1. "That in the opinion of this meeting it is desirable to convene a general meeting of the Liberal party to consider the arrangements to be made for the next General Election for this Borough, and that the Chairman of this Committee convene such meeting accordingly." 2. "That Sir Edward Watkin should be respectfully invited to attend." He has been invited, and I expect to see him here every minute. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, since the present borough of Hythe was formed by the great Reform Act of 1833, we have had many contests—some severe and some in which we have gained rather easy victories; but in all these contests we have been successful; we have always carried a Liberal member; and I think the great cause of our success has been that we have always been united.

I must do our Nonconformist brother electors the justice to say that they, who are certainly a tower of strength to the liberal party throughout the country—(cheers)—have never brought their own particular views in opposition to the general views of the electors, and we have never had extreme men for candidates. Our members have generally been moderate men. Gentlemen, I think you will agree with me that the principal

business of this meeting will be to determine whether Sir Edward Watkin is to be our future candidate. (Hear, hear.) Not having had the opportunity of speaking, I would just say a few words to you and give you my views upon that subject. (Hear, hear.) It is no use, gentlemen, disguising the fact that some of Sir Edward Watkin's staunchest supporters have not been pleased with some of the votes he has lately given. (Hear, hear.) He has voted on some questions independently of his party—(hear, hear, and cheers)—but he has voted according to his own convictions.

Now, gentlemen, this has been, as usual, chiefly on questions of foreign policy. Well, Sir Edward Watkin may be right or he may be wrong—I know that many of you think that he has acted perfectly right. (Cheers.) But what I would ask you is, whether he were right or wrong, has he no right to have an opinion of his own, and because he has acted in a manner which some of us do not exactly like, is that to cancel his life-long service in the cause of civil, religious and commercial liberty. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, I have seen the regulations for the first formation of the Anti-Corn Law League; they are in the handwriting of Sir Edward Watkin's father, who with Mr. Cobden, drew them up. At that time Sir Edward Watkin began his political life. He was then a youth of nineteen years of age and he followed Cobden and Bright in that great agitation for doing away with laws which put an artificial price as you know upon the food of the people. (A voice: Do not talk of the past; give us the future.)

Gentlemen, we generally judge of the future from the past. (Cheers.) What a man has done all his life you may expect him to continue to do. (Hear, hear.) I believe no man has sacrificed more to the Liberal party than Sir Edward Watkin. He has been all his life a consistent Liberal; he has spent his time, his talent, his money in the cause of Liberal ideas. When I say his money, I can tell you that he has had no less than nine contested elections, and they have cost him something I expect. Now, gentlemen, I will give you an extract from an authority which you will all acknowledge to be a great authority on the Liberal side, and I hope you will take it and consider it and follow the advice given in it.

"If sound principles are to prevail they must have effective personal representation; they must be set forth by men who are capable of presenting them in an attractive light; by men

of readiness of speech, of achieved reputation, or of high promise. A loose and hesitating allegiance needs to be confirmed by attractive or impressive personal qualities. Above all these there must be no vindictive proscription of men who differ from their party on any one set of questions, however important.

"We expressed this opinion long ago; even in the extreme and rather trying case of Mr. Walter, and incurred some reproach for doing so. All that has passed since confirms us in our view not simply of the expediency, but of the absolute necessity of mutual toleration if the Liberal party is not to be wholly disorganized. Personal independence, even though it must often involve a mistaken judgment, is a quality to be respected and encouraged. Liberal members who do not wholly share the views of the leaders of opposition on questions of foreign policy represent a minority, but a not inconsiderable minority, in the Liberal party. The alienation of this minority means a plurality of candidates for single seats, and a repetition in 1880 of the mismanagement and disaster of 1874. It is necessary that candidates of high personal qualifications should be chosen, and that the tactics of reconciliation and accommodation and not of proscription and exclusion should be followed." (Cheers.)

That is from the *Daily News*, and it was written in reference to the late Liberal defeat at the Southwark election. I expect Sir Edward Watkin will be here immediately, and I think that the first thing you would like would be to hear him. (Cheers.)

[Sir Edward Watkin here entered the room, and was received with loud and prolonged cheering.]

SIR EDWARD WATKIN: Mr. Chairman, we have entered upon Lent, and those who teach us things that are well for us to know urge us at this time to fasting, to prayer, and to giving of alms. I sometimes wish, both inside the House of Commons and out, that they would also require us to have a little self-abstention in the matter of talking. (Laughter.) I think it would be well for the House of Commons if they talked less and worked more, and I think that in every constituency it would not be altogether an evil if we met each other fairly and quietly upon questions of difference, instead of trying to magnify any little dispute and to do as much mischief as possible for the mere sake of talking. (Cheers.)

There have been times in the history of our country—many, fortunately, and frequent—when “none were for a party, and all were for the state;” and I must say that it has struck me—I hope it will strike you—that, looking at the last three and a half years, there never was a time when it was more necessary that every honest patriot should remember that he was an Englishman first and a party politician afterwards. (Cheers.) Now, sir, I never entered Parliament for any of the constituencies I have represented—as a mere delegate (hear, hear), and as regards the ancient borough of Hythe and its modern sisters of Sandgate and Folkestone, and that country district which the wisdom of Parliament added to its boundaries, I have always considered that I was representing a constituency eminently independent (hear, hear); and I can assure this meeting, and I believe they will be entirely in accordance with me when I say, that the vote of an independent constituency upon those momentous questions which agitate the public mind is of far more value in a moral and patriotic sense than the vote of a constituency which chooses always to crouch to the whipper-in of the party that it professes to prefer. (Cheers.) And, sir, it has always seemed to me that in our constituency of Hythe we have those elements of electoral independence which unfortunately in some constituencies are absent. We have amongst us, to begin with, a resident population of men who have served their country in every clime of the wide world. Then we have professional gentlemen coming here, for the sake of health, whose opinions upon most questions must be not only important but experienced. Then we have the mercantile portion of our constituency, which, for honour and independence, can hardly be equalled. And beyond all that, we have our fishing trade, our artisans and others—men disposed to think for themselves and to defy dictation. (Cheers.) I think, therefore, that if there is a place in the world which, while holding fast to those great principles upon which all free political action is founded, desire in details not to be chained or fettered—if there is such a constituency, it is this; and such a constituency deserves, I venture to think, an independent member. (Cheers.)

I, sir, have always regarded myself as a trustee for that independence, and whenever difficult questions have arisen, I have taken the precaution to consult those whose opinions I

thought might be fairly compared with my own. Not that the opinion of any one man is not as good as the opinion of any other; but there are those fully informed upon questions, and those who from circumstances cannot possibly be so; and hence I have gained the impression that the votes that I shall allude to to-night, which I have given in Parliament as your trustee, are votes which are endorsed and will be endorsed by the great majority of this constituency. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Now, sir, I have been attacked. Everybody must at times be attacked. I look upon it as rather a compliment to be attacked. (Laughter.) People who have done nothing, who know nothing, who have never said anything worth listening to, are never attacked; but the men who have done something, who have said something, who know something, are generally attacked, and usually by those who know nothing, who have said nothing, who have done nothing—except make mischief. (Hear.) Now I should like just to allude for a moment, in a sort of parenthesis, to some little reports that have been going about. We must have reports. I wish they were always as correct as the reports of the gentlemen of the press whom I see below me. But the report that came to my ears was this, that your representative was going to desert you without even giving you the ordinary servant's form of notice; that instead of saying to you that if you did not know when you had a good servant he knew when he had a good master,—he was going absolutely to run away from you—"bag and baggage;" that in addition to that he was going to turn his back upon the active and acting principles of his life, and to be a candidate for a seat in another district of the country upon the strongest principles of re-action; and, moreover, that, confident in his power of being able to do whatever he liked, he was going to bring forward some personal relative to take his place. (Laughter.)

Now, Mr. Chairman, I will neither admit nor deny anything. I will answer by a little American story. A friend of mine, gifted with a good many hard-headed qualities, but with very little quickness, and much less wit, was travelling in the United States of America. In that free and enlightened country they are usually rather fond of chaffing Englishmen, and they saw that this was an Englishman peculiarly open to be chaffed. One of the company in the train happened to be a lady, and ladies in America, I can

assure the charming ladies present, are to Englishmen very dangerous people. It is not so much their beauty, because we can manage that, but it is the peculiar cuteness and slyness which they invariably exhibit. Well, this lady said to my friend, "I guess I will tell you a story that you cannot answer." "Oh," said he, "I do not think you can. I am an Englishman with a peculiar faculty for unfolding riddles." "Well," said the lady, "I will give it you. I met a little boy, and I said to him, 'Have you a father?' 'No,' he said, 'I never had none.' 'Have you got a mother?' 'No, I never had none.' 'Have you got any brothers and sisters?' 'Oh, lots of brothers and sisters.' Now," said the lady, "what is the answer to that?" Well, my friend scratched his head, and knocked his forehead about for an hour or two (laughter), and at length he said, "Well, for the first time in my life I must give it up." "Oh," said the lady, "It is very simple; think again." "Oh, I cannot make it out at all," said the Englishman. "Why," said the lady, "It is very simple, as I told you. The fact was,—the little boy lied." (Much laughter.)

Now, Mr. Chairman, to be serious for a moment. When I am attacked by people for whom I have a contempt it does not come home to me at all; but when I am attacked, as I think, unjustly and unkindly, by constituents for whom I have the highest respect, I confess that it does hurt my feelings. I know it has been stated in the public papers that I have said that the views of the thoughtful and intelligent portion of the constituent body were in favour of my votes, and that my statement led to the most ungrateful and ungraceful inference,—that therefore the minority who did not agree with my votes were neither intelligent nor thoughtful. Now, I beg to say that I never meant—I never said—and I never could have said or meant, any reflection upon these gentlemen (thoughtful and intelligent as they are) who have not entirely agreed with that which I have done; and I take this earliest opportunity of saying that I do not think it was a generous thing to suppose that I could for a moment have assumed that because gentlemen of education and position did not take the exact view with regard to certain questions discussed in Parliament that I took, forming a portion as they did of the great intelligence and thoughtfulness of the borough, they must be unintelligent and unthoughtful. Now, I have been told that I have

been talking the merest bunkum. Well, I may have talked that which to some gentlemen might have appeared the merest bunkum; but I am bound to say that, in a long attachment to the party of progress, this is the first time that I have experienced the weight of such a charge. Then the gentleman who has done me the honour to criticise me and my votes says that he recognizes my courage, but it would be an insult if he said that he acknowledged my honesty. Gentlemen, that is a very grave charge. To tell a man that he is dishonest is about as grave a charge as could be launched against him. I am told—I suppose in consequence of my bunkum and my dishonesty—that there is discontent loud and deep in the borough. (No, no.) Well, I should just like to go back a few years. It seems to me only yesterday since I met a crowded meeting—

The REV. WILLIAM SAMPSON: May I put you right upon a matter of fact. (Cries of "Order," and confusion.)

The CHAIRMAN: I beg you will hear Mr. Sampson.

Mr. SAMPSON: I never—(cries of "Order," and confusion.)

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure Sir Edward Watkin would wish Mr. Sampson to be heard.

Sir EDWARD WATKIN: I shall consider it a personal disfavour to myself if Mr. Sampson is not heard with the respect which is fully due to him.

Mr. SAMPSON: Sir Edward has asked as a personal favour to himself that you will hear my explanation. I want to save time. When Sir Edward says that I have charged him with being dishonest, he has altogether misread my letter. (Hear, hear.) What I said was this—Sir Edward has the letter before him—that I should think it an insult to tell him that he was an honest man. Of course it would be an insult: of course he is an honest man: that is my meaning. (Cheers.)

Sir EDWARD WATKIN: Gentlemen, I always wish to have justice done to me, and I should have no right to make that demand if I did not wish to do justice to everybody else; therefore, I think the best way of settling this little interruption which, to some extent, has deranged the order of my speech, would be for me to read the words to which I have alluded. Mr. Sampson says, "I confess I am puzzled. Sir Edward has voted for his former political opponents. I recognize his

courage in doing so ; I should consider it an insult to him if I were to say that I acknowledge his honesty." I voted for principles ; I did not vote for party. Now, gentlemen, I quite accept Mr. Sampson's explanation of what he meant ; but I want to go back to the last election, and before I sit down I hope I shall have proved conclusively to you that if I am not able to agree with all the views of Mr. Sampson and those who follow him, at the same time without making any compromise of my opinions, I have done everything I could to concede to those gentlemen and the opinions they held. I want to ask what was the great thing that divided the Liberal party in 1874 ? Why, sir, it was mainly, at all events, certain clauses of a measure which I believe will go down to posterity with the name of William Edward Foster attached to it. I mean that great educational charter which silently but surely has been up-raising the intellectual and moral position of the people of this country. (Hear, hear.) There was a clause, notably the twenty-fifth, which excited the greatest difficulty and the greatest discontent amongst many portions of the Nonconformist body. I was, unfortunately, at that time in the position of not sympathizing with the grievance which Mr. Sampson in very forcible and excellent words expressed ; but, although I did not agree with him at that time, I thought that the great Nonconformist body had conferred such benefits upon the freedom and civilization of England, that it was my duty, especially as a churchman, and also, particularly, as your representative, to endeavour if possible to assist in smoothing over and removing a difficulty and a source of distress such as that which Mr. Sampson pointed out. Well, sir, what was the course which I took ? It was that of joining many Liberal members of Parliament, churchman as I am, and as they were, in urging most strongly upon the Government that that which was offensive to our Nonconformist brethren should be wiped out and done away with. We made many efforts, extending over a period of two years, and at the end of that period we got the Government—without a division, I believe—to alter that clause in reference to free education, the payment of the school fees of certain classes of children, and to abolish the twenty-fifth clause absolutely and entirely. Therefore, I am bound to say that while I cannot compromise a principle, I value so much the unity, the brotherhood, and

the personal attachment of this great people of England, that there is nothing I would not do, in order if possible by concession to promote and bring about and increase that union. And I am not afraid to say that I thank the Government for the concession. (Cheers.) And, sir, when my friend Mr. Sampson, I am sure from the highest principle, criticizes my conduct, I am bound to ask in what relative positions we stand. Sir, I think it is nearly forty-four years since I began (I think that is the phrase they used in those days) to meddle in politics. I followed the principles held by my father, and which, I believe, were also the principles of my grandfather, and I hope they may remain the principles of my son, who is in Parliament, however much we may all of us differ with regard to unimportant details; and from that day to this I do not believe that there is any man in England who has employed more time, who has sacrificed more personal interest, who has laboured harder in the promotion of all measures having for their aim civil, religious and commercial liberty—than I have done. (Loud cheers.)

Sir, when I was twenty-one, I had a vote; therefore I was able to throw my lot into the scale in favour of any candidate. I was not excluded, like many of our friends who are ably represented to-night. I was, also, a Churchman, and therefore every office in the State, every piece of preferment in the universities, was open to me. I was under no disqualification; I was under no ban; I had nothing to gain. Personally—for in those days Liberal politics were not very popular with certain classes in this country—personally I had everything to lose; but I fought the battle for my fellow-countrymen, who were Nonconformists, and who had no vote. (Cheers.) Now, gentlemen, I think it is a little hard on a veteran reformer like myself, who has seen every measure which he has struggled for carried, who can feel like the man who has scaled the mountain and gazes down upon the blooming pastures and beautiful groves, everything smiling and delightful, the conquests of his toils and labours—conquests not earned for himself, but for others in disability and exclusion—that he should on the eve of a general election be singled out for attack either here or elsewhere. Why should I, I ask, be persistently so attacked? I know there is a notion that “gratitude is a lively sense of favours to come.” Well, it is very likely that there are few more favours to come

from veterans like myself, because we have seen accomplished that which I look upon as the very root and groundwork of everything that is good in England. We have seen religious equality established. (Cheers, and cries of "No, no.") I know there is one question which we have been told will probably at some time divide us—the question of what is called Disestablishment and Disendowment; but that question has not yet reached, they tell us, "the region of practical politics." Putting, however, that question for a moment aside, leaving each of us to have his own opinions, I should like to know what are the disqualifications, comparing Churchmen and Nonconformists, now remaining. I remember very well when a Nonconformist could not be even a town councillor, when a Roman Catholic could not be anything, when a Jew could not enter Parliament, when the "tithe pig" was so much in the ascendant, that actually in my county, Cheshire, in some cases the collector took every tenth gooseberry off the tree, and every tenth cabbage and cauliflower out of the garden. Then those who were connected with my church had the pleasure of taxing every Nonconformist, and making him pay church rates. As for ourselves, we could go to Oxford and Cambridge, and places of that kind; we could study, we could graduate, we could gain prizes, we could take honours, we could become teachers and principals of our colleges. The Nonconformist could not. Well, the exertions of those with whom I have been associated for all that long period of time have done away with all that; and I say, putting aside for a moment the question of the Church of England, whether it is a source of liberty and enlightenment, or whether it is a source of tyranny and unenlightenment—apart from that, I say that my friend Mr. Sampson is more free to day than the clergymen of the church to which I belong. Perhaps he will contradict that; I will prove it. Now, if our good friend the vicar, who, like your representative, somehow or other appears to attract opposition occasionally, was ambitious of senatorial honours, he would first of all have to give up his living, to take off his gown and cease to be a church clergyman. Now, my friend Mr. Sampson, if he thinks that my notions and my antecedents are so pestilent and so improper that I deserve the most rancorous opposition,—in case you and I should agree that it would be discreet for your interest that I should be a candidate,—why, he might stand against me—(cheers and

laughter)—without breaking any law, but in accordance with law—with a special law that has been passed, which some think is a freedom, but which I think is a penalty upon churchmen. While poor Mr. Woodward would have to put his pulpit in the fire before he could enter the House, fortunate Mr. Sampson—fortunate by our exertions, fortunate by the exertions of Liberal churchmen all over the country—could stand against me, and undoubtedly he would beat me at the poll. (Laughter.) He could electrify the House of Commons night after night for five days in the week, and he could charm and improve his congregation on the Sunday, just as well as ever. (Much laughter.)

Now, I came here to-night, not only to answer a good many questions, but to ask a few, and I want to know whether what I have said can in any sense be denied. I assert that it is a fact, and that nobody can deny it. Now, Mr. Chairman, I am almost ashamed to occupy your time at such length; but I must ask you, for a moment, to consider things, as the French say, *jusqu' au fond*—to look at the foundation of things. Now what are the ultimate foundations of parties? They are very simple. There is prescription and privilege on the one side, producing the Government of the many by the few for the good of the few; and there is, on the other side, the principle of popular self-government, under which the people are governed by the people, and for the good of the people. Now, as long as we adhere to these two principles, I think we are tolerably safe. It was in defence of the principle of civil and religious liberty—and civil liberty involves, of course, free trade and commercial liberty of every kind—that those who preceded me struggled for a lifetime; and I have tried at a great distance, and no doubt with much disadvantage, to follow in their steps. But I am told that I voted against the Liberal party. Now, one of the questions I want to ask—and to which, I think, I should have an answer—is this, What do those gentlemen call the Liberal party? Because my experience of parties is this. There is a great deal that is good under the cowl of each of them, and I very much agree with the late Mr. O'Connell that those names of Whig, and Tory, and Radical, and liquor-seller—and I do not know how many more—are nicknames, and that sensible men are not led away by nicknames and bogies as little boys are frightened in a

churchyard by seeing a sheet on the top of a pitchfork, and a light inside of a turnip. We do not look to shams and nick-names; we look to realities. Well, I say I am on the side of those who opposed prescription and privilege, on the side of those who are in favour of the freedom and self-action of England. (Loud cheers.)

Now, I think it is a healthy thing in an independent borough that we should analyze these questions of parties a little further. At present, on the Conservative side of the House, there is a bench on which thirteen gentlemen nightly sit—that is when they do not feel too much distressed and fatigued or too idle to sit—and they look, I am bound to say, quite as wise as they are. (Laughter.) Then, on the Opposition or Liberal side of the House, there are, I think, thirteen gentlemen who look about as wise as the people on the other side. (Laughter.) Now, am I to be told, as one of the 35,000,000 of England, Ireland, and Scotland, that these twenty-six gentlemen absorb all the talent, all the genius, all the patriotism of the country? Am I to be told that because something that I call a good measure comes either from the Government side or the Opposition side, if I sit on the Opposition side I must not vote for what I believe to be a great measure because it came from those thirteen gentlemen who look so wise on the Government side. (Cheers.) My idea of my duty as your representative is this, that if I see a measure that will promote in any way the freedom and happiness of the people and the glory and honour of the country, from whichever side of the House it comes, I ought to support it. (Cheers.)

Now we do not exactly know what those thirteen gentlemen on the Government side do, but I am bound to say with regard to the thirteen upon the other side, that in the last six years, so far as I know, with regard to the momentous questions, when a unity of action amongst the party was clearly most important, there has never been a meeting of the Liberal Members of Parliament to consider any question whatever. I mention this, not in any way to weaken the Liberal party, not in any way to sow dissension,—for I have never been a party to dissension; I have always been desirous to make any and every sacrifice to prevent dissension,—but I say it because I think the time has come when, if the Liberal party is ever again to be a great power in the State—

parties all round should to some extent reconstruct themselves. I have endeavoured to lay down for your consideration the two different principles upon which parties are founded. So far as I am concerned, having taken an independent course, I do not intend—it is too late in life for me to do it—to turn my back upon those principles that have guided our family for four generations. But my difference with my friend Mr. Sampson and others has been this: I have objected, and I do object, to foreign policy being made a party question: I have objected, and do object, especially to that which has disfigured as I think some portion of our press,—that the disasters of England, however caused (we need not mention that for the moment), should be looked upon as things proper to whet the appetite of political asperity. (Hear, hear.) If you ask me what is my notion of the foreign policy of England—I say the duty of England.

These gentlemen every Sunday from their pulpits tell us of our individual duties; I wish they would tell us a little more of our national duties; because if I, as a man and a Christian, living in a free country, owe a duty to my neighbour, the thirty-five millions of England owe a duty to all the world. I am one of those who think that Providence has given to us a power, an influence, a wealth, a capacity, which imposes upon us the duty of endeavouring, so far as we can, to act, not only with regard to political liberty, but with regard to the great truths of Christianity, from which all real liberty springs—as the great missionary of the world. (Cheers.) And now we come to the pith of the question. I told you when I came before you in 1874, as regards the policy, as it is called, of England, but, as I would venture to describe it, the duty of England, I was very much of the opinion of Chatham, of Pitt in his earlier and better days, of Canning, of Huskisson, of Peel, and of Palmerston. I see no reason in any way to retract the general outline of policy which I took the liberty to announce when you did me the honour to elect me. (Cheers.) On the other hand, there is a school in England—the school of, so called, non-intervention—which I think has provoked more war than any other school. It has put on the outward disguise of peace. It has led foreign nations to think that you might tread upon the tail of the British lion as much as you liked, but it would never roar. (Cheers.) Yes—I think, that school of politicians, with the best intentions, have made mischief and misery in

the world. (Renewed Cheers.) Mr. Chairman, is there no intermediary course of action between going round the world as a great bully challenging everybody, and that firmness which the man of courage shows in calm and the sense of strength, and which teaches the coward and the bully that, quiet as the man may be, if they once cross his path he is the most dangerous opponent, because he fights not for defiance, not for aggression, but for human right and eternal justice. (Cheers.)

I now come for a moment to those questions which I have been mostly taxed about, and I will, if you please, begin with the Zulu War; I will then say a word or two with regard to the vexed question of Afghanistan, and then I will come back to the great subject—what is called the Eastern Question, and I will do all I can to justify the votes which I have given in your name and on your behalf upon those three questions.

It is not more than fourteen months ago that we heard of that dreadful disaster in Zululand where some two thousand people, Englishmen and subsidiaries in the army, were slaughtered, fighting as each one did to the very death, against overpowering numbers. I think we might say of them—

“ But in behind our path they closed,
Though fain to let us through;
For they were forty thousand men,
And we were wondrous few.”

(Cheers.) Sir, there is in Zululand a bishop. He was sent out by one of our societies—I believe a society connected with the Church of England—to convert the Zulus—the whole of them, mind—and he was converted himself by *one* Zulu—(laughter)—and ever since then, instead of standing up for the Christianity which civilizes, enlightens, frees, and ennobles, he has been doing all he could to place the dry rot of disbelief inside the pages of the Bible. (Cheers and interruption.) I am sure my friends will allow me to finish the few remarks I have to make. Fortunately for us, we have in Zululand, and that part of South Africa, other ministers of the Gospel. Now, I do not like to inflict a long extract upon you; but as I intend to print everything that I say to-night, and circulate it to every elector present and absent, I will merely say that if you will get a little book, written by the Rev. Clifford Holden, a respected missionary of the Wesleyan body, who has been nearly forty

years out in Africa, and who is the honoured brother of your worthy mayor, you will find that he tells you distinctly, at page 199, that the policy which has been pursued in Zululand has been absolutely inevitable.*

Now, I am told that lately Lord Hartington voted, as I

* The extracts are as follows :—

Page 199, "British Rule in South Africa."

"The vast extent of country which now constitutes the Orange Free State and the Transval was subsequently taken possession of *by the English, not the Dutch, and an English government formed*, which continued, until, in a dark hour, under wofully mistaken policy, the whole was given over to the Dutch farmers. Those who will avail themselves of the information supplied in the 'History of the Orange River Sovereignty,' as contained in the appendix of my *History of Natal*, will have all the details of these proceedings before them.

"Let the reader, then, who wishes to understand the subject fully, take the maps of South Africa, of Kaffirland and of Zululand, as given in my works, and turn to the different countries under review, and he will then see that, instead of retaking the Transval to 'round off' the British possessions in South Africa, the *Transval* is *BEYOND* the *Free State*, *Natal* is *BEYOND* *Kaffirland*, which comes in between the Cape Colony and the Natal Colony, and *Zululand* is *BEYOND* Natal, stretching on to Delegoa Bay. But the Transval already extends two degrees *beyond* the Amazulu. Thus these barbaric, uncivilized states were not isolated or separated from each other, but in the midst of existing British possessions and that what affects one must of necessity affect all. Hence before general permanent peace can be established, and suitable laws formed and enforced, there must be one great central governing race that can make wise and good laws, sustained by a power which can enforce those laws so as to make them respected and obeyed. Hence the absolute necessity of a united strong English government of confederated States, having each its own local government, but being united and one for all great interests, especially having one uniform mode of government for all the varying native races of the country. Races varying in colour from the pale white through every tinge to the jet black; races speaking many languages from the Koranna with *thirteen clicks* to the Kaffir, with his *euphonic concord*. My conviction has long been that the subjugation of the Amazulu nation to British sway was necessary before this much needed consummation could take place. Then, with general or universal peace, this nation of fragmentary states and people will become one united mighty power; each and all having increased facilities for developing the resources of the country; extending mercantile transactions, encouraging Christian missions, and growing into one of the great and good dominions of the globe, speaking the English language, and planting English arts and industries throughout the land.

I think the necessity of the subjugation of the Amazulu race is thus clearly indicated.

think in an unhappy moment, with Sir Wentworth Dilke, and that I voted against Sir Wentworth Dilke. Now let me tell you, gentlemen, that the publication of recent blue-books and other documents, and the information which I have very carefully obtained, convince me that no inducement in the world would make me vote in a different way from that which I adopted on that occasion ; and I express the most entire confidence that now, with all the information before us, Lord Hartington would not vote with Sir Wentworth Dilke upon that question again. (Cheers.)

Well, if you want any more evidence, you will find a letter by Mr. Anthony Trollope, who is a good and true Englishman and an author, published in the *Daily News* of the 7th of February.* In addition to that, if you will look at the last blue-book, you will find a letter from the Rev. Henry Goden of the Dutch Reformed Church, in which he concludes by saying, "In Africa, at least, the greatest majority of the colonists, even of the missionaries, who are generally accused to be partial to the natives, fully approve of the policy of His Excellency towards the Zulus."† Now, the admirers of Cetewayo do not

* The letter is in full, as follows:—

*Extract from Letter of ANTHONY TROLLOPE to "Daily News" of
February 7th.*

"I visited the country in 1877, and found that the allegations made were true. The Dutch Boers had not congregated even for purposes of defence. No taxes had been paid for many months. The mail services were all discontinued. Property had become worthless. Education had fallen lower and lower. Things had begun to change a little for the better, because the country had been annexed ; but the interference had hardly been in time. My conviction was that, had not the English interfered, European supremacy throughout a large portion of South Africa, would have been endangered. Looking to the probable results of such a condition, I think that the annexation was an imperative duty."

† The extracts are as follows:—

Rev. Henry Goden, Dutch Reformed Church, Saul's Port, Aug. 20, 1879.

"What I have seen and heard in my travels, and my long residence in this country, leaves no doubt in my mind that a war with the Zulus was unavoidable, and would have broken out sooner or later. I am quite convinced that the powerful Chief of the Zulus was at the bottom of all the late risings of the natives in South Africa. He was, with his well-organized, numerous troops, a sword of Damocles.

"Since years an outbreak of the war with the Zulus was anticipated.

tell you that he was crowned unfortunately under the auspices of the British nation, under certain conditions. If you will pardon me for a moment I will quote from the Rev. Mr. Holden's book what those conditions were. I beg your attention to this matter, because it is not merely a question of my votes; it is a question of the humanity of the world. The first condition was that the indiscriminate shedding of blood should cease in the land; the second was that no Zulu should be condemned without open trial and the public examination of witnesses for and against, and that he should have a right to appeal to the King. The third was that no Zulu's life should be taken without the previous knowledge and consent of the King after such trial had taken place, and the right of appeal had been allowed to be exercised; and the fourth was that, for minor crimes, the loss of property—all or a portion of it—should be substituted for the general punishment of death. Now, I ask my opponents whether they do not think that those stipulations which were attached to our sanction of the crowning of that black and barbarous King—not that because he is black he ought to be or need be barbarous, because the missionaries out there can show you many a chief converted to Christianity, who has, if not a high education, all the goodness and gentleness of a Christian—I ask my opponents whether they do not think that those were stipulations which ought to have been enforced.

Well, then, what was the cause of the war? The cause of the war was twofold: one was that those conditions were

Since years an invasion from their parts in the South African Colonies was feared. If such an invasion had *taken place it would have been a fearful calamity*; the savage Zulus would have destroyed everything by fire and sword.

* * * * *

"The King of the Zulus once subdued, his power broken, I quite expect that South Africa will enjoy many years of peace and prosperity.

* * * * *

"Here, in Africa at least, the greatest majority of the Colonists, even of the missionaries, who are generally accused to be partial to the natives, fully approve of the policy of his Excellency towards the Zulus.

Evelyn Wood.

"Cetewayo's peaceful professions cannot be reconciled with his conduct at Luneburg; but I do know that it would be an evil day for England when the meanest home entitled to the protection of her flag ceases to be a castle of the Empire."

outrageously broken, that life was taken, that murders were committed, that outrages of a most abominable kind were perpetrated under the rule of this man, upon those whom he chose to call his subjects. The other was repeated and gross violation of our territory. One form of outrage was this. No man was allowed to be married until he had been a soldier, and until, to use their phrase, he had washed his spears in the blood of some enemy. Well, at last this military power grew to such an extent that it was absolutely necessary to check it. Those who tell you that this was an innocent black gentleman who never did any wrong to anybody, who was perfectly innocuous, and therefore might have been trusted under the friendship of Dr. Colenso, did not tell you of the outrages upon British territory. Now, the great army of this savage man grew to such an extent that Sir Bartle Frere, as your Plenipotentiary abroad, in adjudicating upon some questions of land between the Boers and the Zulu nation (giving his judgment, by the way, in favour of the Zulus) insisted upon an ultimatum. What was that ultimatum? That those conditions which the Zulu king had agreed to when he was crowned should be carried out, and that this great overpowering army of 30,000 or 40,000 men in his wedge-shaped territory should be disbanded. Now, let us assume for a moment that that cornice represents the sea coast line of South Africa, and that you have above the door the sea coast line of Zululand. Just suppose, for a moment, that in all that large territory you have a scattered white population, wishing to live in peace, wanting to outrage nobody, but requiring security and protection. Do you mean to tell me that any nation that was great and powerful would permit 30,000 or 40,000 men to be constantly in battle array in the 100 miles in the midst, threatening both sides, when the principles of those people were, in case of war, indiscriminate slaughter, and the ripping up of victims with their assegais? I say for myself, and in that I am corroborated by every man engaged in the struggle,—by Sir Bartle Frere, and by a large body of missionaries and natives belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church, the Wesleyans, and the Swedish Church,—that war was an absolute necessity in the interests of humanity, and in opposition to the undisputed reign of barbaric cruelty. (Cheers.)

Cetewayo insisted that his men should serve as soldiers, and should wash their spears in blood, before they were married. Now, there were two women—and you know women do not always like to be married to anybody who is forced upon them ; they are independent all over the world, certainly they are in England (laughter), who did not exactly like to be tied to some great ruffians of soldiers whom they had never seen before, and might not wish to see again, and they accordingly escaped into British territory. What was the result? The English frontier was violated, and those women were taken back into Zululand—and murdered. I want to know, is that an offence which the gentlemen who are for non-intervention and peace, and everything of that kind, would allow to remain unavenged? I agree with Sir Evelyn Wood, that the day when the humblest dwelling of the humblest citizen of this country has ceased to be inviolate—to be a castle of the empire—will be a bitter and unfortunate day for England.* (Cheers.)

* As much has been said about "John Dunn," I add the following : —"John Dunn is the son of natives of Great Britain, who settled in South Africa. His father had some appointment under the Colonial Government, but was killed suddenly by his horse being frightened at the sudden debouché of wild elephants near where Durban now is.

"Dunn was educated for medicine, but being a bold fine lad he, at sixteen, could not resist the charm of wild life and sport in Zululand, and left his mother at Pietermaritzburgh, and went on an expedition, after sport, in Zululand, where he has lived for more than twenty years, much beloved by the people and respected by them. A person who had known him for many years said his influence had been acquired among the fine wild fellows of Zululand by his inflexible justice, and that they had never heard of a case in which he had wronged a Zulu. Be that as it may, extraordinary confidence and affection towards him was testified by all the chiefs of the southern half of Zululand, who came in and submitted to General Crealock, and this confidence and sort of worship extended to all classes. He did all he possibly could to prevent the king (Cetewayo) going to war. He strongly advised him, even if we crossed his border, not to fight. But when he saw war was inevitable, and that the king was only waiting for our troops to be embarked, to sweep into Natal, when there would have been the most terrible massacre of whites and others ever heard of—he left the Zulu king, who would not be guided by him—and he came over to us, 'bag and baggage.' But he lost a very large number of cattle, three country houses, farms, &c., all of which were taken or destroyed by the Zulus. He, greatly against his own desire, was attached to Lord Chelmsford as a political agent and intelligence officer when Lord Chelmsford advanced to and relieved Eckowe. Lord Chelmsford had

Now, I do not want to trouble you very much, but I must say a word upon the question of the Afghan war, and here I will ask this other question ; is it the opinion of our friends that we ought to give up the Indian empire, or that we ought to keep it? (Cries of "Keep it.") I say, and I challenge denial, that the British rule in India has been, perhaps, not an unmixed blessing, because there is no such thing as an unmixed blessing in human experience, but a great civilizing, freedom-restoring power, which has been for the good of the two hundred millions of people under the British sway.

I say that we have established entire religious liberty,—the dearest of all liberties—a liberty worth fighting for. The Mohammedan can no longer oppress the Hindoo, and the various sects of Hindoos can no longer oppress each other. The horrible rite of suttee, under which when a man died his widow must be burnt with his corpse, has been done away with, and that Juggernaut, in which thousands of men

perfect confidence in him, and spoke most highly of him. He came with General Crealock in the same capacity, and was found to be simple, straightforward, and quite truthful and upright ; most reliable in all his information, whether local or political. He was of the greatest use to the General in all ways ; and he was much regarded by Commodore Richards and all who knew him. To his presence the flocking to the General of all the great chiefs from the Tuguela to St. Lucia Bay, a distance of 120 miles, was due, as they knew they could trust him ; and when he told them they were safe, if they submitted at once and gave up their arms and cattle, they believed him and came in. As a fact no one ever submitted to the other columns. He is as brave as a lion, very cool, very reserved and silent, a tremendous sportsman, good rider, and good shot ; about 42 years old, spare, and active ; extremely good looking, and very like a gentleman in every way. General Crealock recommended him to Sir Garnett Wolseley on his arrival, when he took over political charge from the General ; and he was appointed "Induna," or chief governor of the south district of Zululand. He signed conditions with the Government as regards his government, &c. He did *not* refuse missionaries leave to settle in his district, but he did insist on their giving him an assurance that missions were to be what they pretended to be, and not stations for trade in arms and spirits, as half were before—and that missionaries should undertake to teach the Zulus some trade or occupation when gathered at the stations as well as the usual catechisms and singing, to which all will cordially agree. Sir Garnet has entirely approved of all he has done since he has assumed direction of affairs there.

"He is married to *one wife* (Mrs. J. Dunn), a colonial lady, and has eleven children by her. His elder daughters are very pretty girls."

laid themselves down before a brutal car, and were crushed to death, under the notion that that would give them a portal to heaven, has been put an end to. Then, again, roads and railways and works of irrigation have been established, and employment has been afforded to the people, and a start has been given to the industry and progress of the country. I give it as my opinion—whatever it may be worth—that if to-morrow our non-intervention friends were to cast off India from the rule of England, it would be an evil day for India; and although this country might with its great resources bear such a separation, India would be reduced again to barbarism and internecine struggle. Now, with regard to the Afghan war, I think you cannot have a better witness than Sir Frederick Roberts, and I am bound to say that I, for one—a peaceful man, a peace-loving man, a meek man—or I could not bear all these censures with all this equanimity—(laughter)—have read with the greatest indignation those brutal attacks that have been made upon Sir Frederick Roberts, as gallant a soldier, as humane a man, as great a statesman (because a man can be a great soldier and a great statesman at the same time), as ever existed. He has been accused of hanging men right and left, and of indulging in the most atrocious tyranny and cruelty. What has he done? We sent an envoy under treaty to Cabul; he was under the protection of the Ameer who had entered into the treaty with us; he went with the full consent of the Ameer and under the protection of that treaty. He was assassinated, his place pulled down about his ears, and every one of his suite murdered; and their poor unfortunate remains, mutilated in a most barbarous manner, were dragged by these men along the streets of Cabul. (Shame.)

You may tell me, some of you, that that is a case where we ought to have turned the other cheek—I am afraid I am not good enough to sanction that principle, and I say—turn me out if you like for saying it—that, as to those men who broke that treaty and were guilty of that treachery, murdered our people, and dishonoured them when they were dead, I would hang them as high as Haman. (Cheers.) Now let me bring you back to the initial point, which is this—Ought we to keep India, or ought we not? If you told me that we ought to cast off the painter and let it go, I have not a word to say;

but if you tell me that we are to keep it, and if I can show you that we were in all probability to be at some opportune time attacked, I think you will agree with me that, knowing that we were to be attacked, we were compelled to wipe out the means of attacking us immediately. (Cheers.) That is the whole question of the Afghan war. Now, here is what Sir Frederick Roberts says :—

“ Our recent rupture with Shere Ali has, in fact, been the means of unmasking and checking a very serious conspiracy against the peace and security of our Indian Empire. The magnitude of Shere Ali's military preparations is, in my opinion, a fact of peculiar significance. I have already touched upon this point in a former letter, but I shall perhaps be excused for noticing it again. Before the outbreak of hostilities last year, the Ameer had raised and equipped with arms of precision sixty-eight regiments of infantry and sixteen of cavalry. The Afghan artillery amounted to near 300 guns. Numbers of skilled artisans were constantly employed in the manufacture of rifled cannon and breach-loading small arms. More than a million pounds of powder, and I believe several million rounds of home-made Snider ammunition, were in the Bala Hissar at the time of the late explosion. Swords, helmets, uniforms and other articles of military equipment were stored in proportionate quantities. Finally, Shere Ali had expended upon the construction of the Shurper Cantonments an astonishing amount of labour and money. The extent and cost of this work may be judged of from the fact that the whole of the troops under my command will find cover during the winter within the cantonment and its outlying buildings, and the bulk of them in the main line of rampart itself, which extends to a length of nearly two miles under the southern and western slopes of the Bemaroo hills. Shere Ali's original design was apparently to carry the wall entirely round the hills—a distance of five miles—and the foundations were already laid for a considerable portion of this length. All these military preparations were quite unnecessary *except as a provision for contemplated hostilities with ourselves*; and it is difficult to understand how their entire cost could have been met from the Afghan treasury, the gross revenue of the country amounting only to about eighty lakhs of rupees per annum. I

" have referred to the prevalence of Russian coin and wares
 " in Cabul as evidence of the growing connection between
 " Russia and Afghanistan. I am unable to find proof that
 " the Czar's coin was introduced in any other way than by
 " the usual channels of trade. It is quite possible that the
 " bulk of it, if not the whole, came in gradually by this
 " means, the accumulation of foreign gold in particular being
 " considerable in this country, where little gold is coined.
 " Nevertheless, it seems to me a curious fact that the amount
 " of Russian money in circulation should be so large. No
 " less than 13,000 gold pieces were found among the Ameer's
 " treasure alone; similar coins are exceedingly common in the
 " city bazaar; and great numbers of them are known to be
 " in possession of the airdars."

Now, gentlemen, I am not one of those who wish in any way to emulate the territorial ambition of ancient States. I know, as respects the Empire of Rome, it was said that it was a government "begun by fratricide, augmented by robberies and rapes, established by valour and conquest, and undone by luxury and vice;" and of that kind of ambition it has been said :—

" Ambition is a weed that's always found
 To spread the furthest in the richest ground;
 Fair to the eye the fragrant blossoms rise,
 But he who plucks the fruit and tastes it dies."

The ambition which I think ought to possess a country like our own is of a totally different description. It should be an ambition to preserve peace, so far as peace can be preserved. I do not use the phrase about "Peace with Honour," but peace so far as is consistent with duty. There is something far beyond honour, and that is duty; and I say, so long as our duty to our country and the world permits it, peace ought to be secured—secured at any price less than the sacrifice of duty. But when it comes to be a question whether British subjects should be outraged with impunity—whether the Christian religion shall be a crime—whether people are to be down-trodden or to be relieved from oppression—then I say—if I comprehend anything of the providential reason why England is a powerful nation—I say that the possession of that power imposes upon us the duty of interfering in those cases where not to interfere would be decidedly a crime, (Cheers.)

Now let me say a word or two about the Eastern Question. With regard to this Eastern Question, the complaint against me is that—at what I thought a critical time—I voted with the existing Government, and against those with whom I usually acted, in reference to the sending to Malta the Indian Contingent. Now, I have never, in anything that I have said in Folkestone, acquitted the Government of what I think was a mistake in not having accepted in principle the Berlin Memorandum. We had a meeting in Folkestone, when we laid down the principle unanimously, that, so far as the arm of England could go, it should never be a crime in any part of the world to be a Christian. Certainly, that was *not* a non-intervention proposition, and I thought that after that, when the Government of this country were represented in Constantinople, they ought to have said to the Turks, that if they did not redress the grievances of the Christian population we should put on our armour and compel them to do so. More than that, I think the Government were wrong in leaving Constantinople without a distinct pledge from the other powers that if there was to be intervention it should be a general intervention, and not an intervention of one power alone. I think those were very serious mistakes. I know it will be said on the other side, "Why, you the party of peace—you the non-interventionists—you the extreme Liberals—if we had attempted to threaten war, would have immediately got up and denounced us as men who wanted to provoke it." Now, it is only fair to remind you that in 1854, we had a Liberal Government; we then had the Crimean War, and we certainly got no result, except blood and loss, as I conceive it, out of that sanguinary contest. We have recently had, whatever the mistakes of the Government may have been (and I am not the man to be cowardly enough if I see results not to state them, or to quote them in a way which is unfair to anybody), a most critical state of affairs; and whether it be by good luck or by good management, we have escaped from that critical state of affairs in a different way from what happened in 1854—we have got through it without a war. (Cheers.) Well, I am glad for the result, whatever the cause. We got rid of the 25th clause, which annoyed some of our friends so much; and by the action of the Government this war has been prevented.

Now I want to know why we should be so ungenerous, whatever criticisms we may utter against the Government, as not to give them credit at all events for having preserved us from another sanguinary conflict in Europe? (Cheers.)

I do not believe that any honest man who has read and thought upon the subject, and who has been about Europe as I have, can doubt for a moment that if in 1854 the Government of Lord Aberdeen had said to Russia, "If you cross the Pruth we will go to war with you,"—there would have been no war. And I believe that if you had not put your foot down on a very recent occasion, and said to Russia that if certain things were done there would be war, you would have had a general war in Europe. Now I may be wrong; but I want to know whether a man who has been engaged in politics and business, and has read and thought a great deal, and has been very much over the world, and has had to some extent perhaps exceptionally good means of observation, has, or has not, a right to an opinion? Condemn me, if you like, but do not say I have no right to an opinion. Well, what was the reason why I voted again, with the greatest possible regret, against the views of a man for whom I have the greatest possible regard and admiration—I mean Lord Hartington? Why? Because it struck me that if we did not make a demonstration and shew that we were in earnest—that we were not the weak people of 1854—a universal conflagration would have taken place. (Cheers.)

I am sure you will consider, Mr. Chairman, that I have wearied this kind audience sufficiently (No, no); but I want to say a few words as to what yet remains to be done. Our first duty is to resist *reaction*. Reaction comes from indifference—sometimes; from divisions—always. Cromwell and the Puritans, and new-born British power, came to a disgraceful end with Charles II.; the Bill of Rights, of 1668, got its first blow of faction in the Septennial Act of 1716; and America and our people were alienated from us in 1776. It is true that Pitt, in the brilliant morning of his youth and power, sowed a seed of renewed liberty which has blossomed in our day. But fetter after fetter was forged, and after sixty years, nearly, of reactionary government, the uprising of 1830 compelled Reform in Parliament, and through Parliament. And our great triumphs of principle date from thence. My opponents think they have surplus power enough to stop re-

newed reaction. I say they have not. I tell them they have no protection for their new-born equality of rights and privileges except in union. I tell them they are on the road to reaction. I will not weary you with a list of the great reforms which have produced the freedom and contentment which we have seen recently around us,—the Franchise, the Ballot, Education, Free Trade, a Free Press, Religious Liberty—all those great measures which in the last forty years have been achieved by perpetual agitation and discussion. I have been told that I ought to remember that all these were opposed by the Tories and supported by the Liberals. Well, it is quite enough for me to know that every one of these great changes was supported by me and by those like me, who had nothing to gain and everything to lose, but who acted on the principle of doing to their fellow-citizens as they would be done by (cheers); and I think that one of the greatest triumphs of that party to which all my life I have belonged—I do not mean a sham party who want to get into places; but I mean the people who believe in principle—is that they have on many notable occasions,—on Catholic Emancipation, on Free Trade, on Household Suffrage, on Disabilities in the Universities, on the Emancipation of the Jews,—converted their opponents. Now, if I convert my opponent, ought I to despise him? It is said that there is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety-nine sinners who do not repent. The great modern doctrine seems to be, that there shall be more hatred thrown upon one sinner that you convert than upon ninety-nine who resist your conversion. (Laughter.)

Now I do not believe in that, and I say that an independent constituency—it comes to that at the last—who return an independent Member, should demand from that independent Member the pluck to support any ministry that the people of England have placed in power, if they bring forward a measure that he believes will remove disabilities or increase the freedom and happiness of the people. (Cheers.)

Now I ask what remains to be done? A great many things remain to be done. Although the great principles of equality in civil and religious matters have been all but, if not entirely, satisfied, there are some measures of progress which require to be tackled. There is, for instance, the question of labourers' dwellings. I have been attacked because I have

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said that I do not think that a hovel, where father and mother and sisters and brothers, all live together like so many pigs in a sty, ought to be dignified by the possession of a vote. Why did I say that? Was it because some poor agricultural labourer might be disfranchised? No; but as a blow in the direction of obtaining for those unfortunate countrymen of ours better dwellings, in which Christian men, humble though they may be, may reside with credit and advantage.* (Cheers.)

I think that the question of improving the dwellings of the poorer classes of this country is one that is at the very root of our future progress. My friend Mr. Ulyett and Mr. Clarke may teach, and Mr. Sampson and Mr. Woodward may preach, and you may have your societies, and everything of that kind; but I say that so long as you bring up children of the rising generation in the cottages of the land like pigs, you will teach and preach and exert yourselves in vain. (Cheers.) With that qualification I am perfectly ready to vote for a wise extension of the franchise in counties, so long as you do not give it the name of hovel franchise, instead of what it really ought to be—household franchise. (Cheers.)

Then there are questions affecting the middle classes. The working classes, by the excellent management of this Government and preceding Governments,—I do not at all blame them,—no doubt it was done for political and not for benevolent reasons,—are, to a large extent, emancipated from the obligations of the income tax; but what have the Governments done for the shopkeeper, and for middle-class men generally, for professional men, poor clergymen, and persons of that class? If I have got a large estate which I can sell at any time for what is called thirty-three years' purchase, that is thirty-three times as much as the annual rental, I am assessed at so much in the pound: if I am a surgeon in practice in the poor districts of Folkestone, or other districts, as my friend Dr. Bateman knows, and other medical gentlemen whom I see in this room, I am taxed as if my income was as good as the income of the man who derives it from land, whereas perhaps my life is not worth ten years' purchase.

* In this I am quite consistent. In 1867 I proposed an amendment to the Disraeli Reform Bill, to the effect that a "house," to be taken as a "house" for voting purposes, shall be "a tenement containing not less than two habitable apartments." Mr. Disraeli accepted this amendment, but certain Liberals opposed it, on popularity-hunting principles; unfortunately it did not pass.

It is the same with regard to the trader whose business depends on his health, his connection, his good fortune, seasons, and fifty things of that kind. I say that to tax such a man exactly as if he had permanent possession of so much landed property is not fair.

Then there is another great question to be discussed,—the reform of our land laws.

The Government have, I think very wisely, introduced four bills on that subject. I approve of the principle of those bills, but I am sorry to say that, much as I respect her Majesty's Government, my complaint against them is this, that they lay down very important principles, that they admit the necessity of certain very important measures, but still they are not what my friend in the chair would call allopathists, they are homœopathists, and they treat us to a very small pinch of physic when we want a good rousing draught or bolus to clear our system. (Laughter.)

But we must be thankful, I suppose, for small mercies. I always like to get my friend upon the right course. I always like to see him put in the right way; and if he does not go quite as fast as I should wish, when I see him fairly on the road I try to give him a little push behind. (Laughter.)

Well, gentlemen, there is another great question of the day—the question of Ireland. We are told by many of my Irish friends in the House of Commons that no good will be done until they have an independent Parliament in College Green. (Cries of "Never!")

Now you know, "What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander." But if one part of the Empire has a separate Parliament the other three must be equally favoured or damaged. Whether the goose is John Bull, and the gander our friends on the other side of the Channel, or not, I do not know; still we are all fellow-citizens, and I am sure we have a very kindly feeling for each other. I only know that I sent over the other day a contribution of a few friends of mine—£500—to buy seed potatoes for the poor farmers in Ireland; and if I could have sent them £5,000, they should have had it with all the pleasure in life. They talk to us about domestic legislation. My answer to that is this: Do you think if you had a Parliament in Dublin to-morrow it would save those hundreds and thousands of people, who are threatened with starvation because they have no seed to renew

their crops? Some facetious man has said, it would take about twelve months to organize, and they would be sure to quarrel about it. In all probability the price of shillelaghs would considerably rise—(laughter)—and you would require a British regiment to be sent from London or Folkestone to put down the scrimmage got up amongst themselves. (Laughter.)

Then, with regard to the other plan that has been proposed from a much more important quarter, that the present land-owners should sell their land—at low prices of course, because if sold at high prices nobody would care to buy—to the present tenants, I want to know what would become of the present labouring man, and the future tenant and the future labouring man. It would only, as it seems to me, be substituting for a small number of landlords a large number of landlords still more interested in screwing everybody, except themselves. We have all got our crotchets, and my cure for Ireland is—Great public works. I ventured to say at Manchester that if I were the administrator of Ireland I would treat that country as I would treat a badly cultivated and unimproved farm. I should find that in ordinary seasons it barely produces food, of a very humble kind, for five and a-half millions of people, and I should say that by certain developments and improvements it might produce good food and plenty of it, good wages and plenty of them, for perhaps double that population. I should, as a plain, practical man, set myself to consider what are the measures necessary to make that island produce double or treble the present quantity of food? I think that is common sense. I am sure that is the way that every farmer in Kent, when he takes a poor impoverished farm goes to work. If he did not do it in that way, he would find that falling down on his knees or saying his prayers, or getting up a political demonstration to denounce the Archbishop of Canterbury, or somebody else, would not lead to his growing two blades of grass where previously only one grew. If I had to do the work I should follow the example that has been set us in France. And here I may say,—quite apart from politics, and, of course, by way of parenthesis,—that I think one of the greatest Ministers since Colbert that France ever had is the present Mons. de Freycinet, who is deepening the harbour at Boulogne. Of course this is not politics. You must assume for a moment that in-

stead of being at a political meeting you have got into a railway meeting. (Laughter.) Now, I have made up my mind that by means of that great work now in the course of accomplishment, after years of labour, anxiety, and opposition, Folkestone will be the front door of England—(cheers)—for access to the Continent, and everything that is reached through the Continent. But to come back to Ireland, I should like to do for that country what Mon. de Freycinet is doing for France. He is laying out in France on railways, canals, harbours, roads, drainage, and public works, two hundred millions of money distributed over ten years—twenty millions a year—and he estimates, and the estimate is perfectly reliable, that that will add at least thirty per cent. to the productive power of France. If I had my way I would try that French experiment upon Ireland. (Cheers.) I would make Ireland the great high road to the British Dominion in Canada,—a dominion which, thanks to a little party of men of whom I was one, now extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific, is of larger area than the great United States of America, and recognizes British law, being the honoured and loyal subject of Queen Victoria. I would make a ship canal right across Ireland, so that the American and Canadian Continent and the Port of Liverpool, or other ports upon our western coast, should be reached two days sooner than they are at present. In doing that I should tap some of those great bogs in Ireland and lay the foundation of a traffic such as no one now expects. And I would carry out the same system of improving the roads, the railways, the docks and the harbours that has been carried out elsewhere.—[A Voice: "I'll vote for you after that." (Laughter).]—The first effect of that would be that every sensible man who is frightened by all these wild political schemes that do not mean the moving of a spade of earth, or the digging up of a single weed, would say, "Now, that is a practical thing;" hope would come back into the hearts of the people, and wages would rise. I know some may say, "Oh dear me, if you give higher wages that would be a dreadful thing for the farmers and the householders." I say, "No." High wages mean the cheapest work—I have tried it; you cannot get a full amount of work out of a starving man. Pay him good wages, feed him well, and he will

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give you good work, and the work he will give you will be cheaper than that which you get out of the poor slave with his eightpence or tenpence a day. Then it would have the effect of soothing over all those national differences—differences of race and antagonisms which unfortunately have existed between England and Ireland. Now, gentlemen, there are other questions that can be dealt with to-night; but I want to give a full opportunity to those who follow me for saying whatever they like.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I think we may congratulate ourselves that after more than forty years of progress we are still ruled over by Queen Victoria. (Cheers.) We have had during her reign a constitutional sovereign governing a constitution-loving people. The court has been a perfect contrast to those iniquities that were described in reference to the courts from Charles II. downwards, when it was said,

“Here round and round the ghosts of beauties glide
Haunting the places where their honour died.”

In her Majesty's court there has been a purity and a high tone which has reflected honour upon our Court, and which has been a bright example to courts all over the world. Some people say—I have heard it often—I heard it upon that vote of mine confirming the government in bringing those Indian troops to Malta—that the prerogatives of the Crown were being strained. Now, I can quite understand in an emergency a ministry taking the responsibility of acts—being of course responsible to Parliament with their heads—because a ministry can be impeached, and, if you choose to go to that length, everyone of them may be executed. Perhaps some of you, who are vehement opponents of the Government, may say that it would be no misfortune to the country if such a thing were to happen. (Laughter.) I do not go quite so far as that, but be that as it may, is it not natural,—is it not right and proper that when a Sovereign like our Queen, who, since 1837, has read every important despatch which has come to this country, who has really made the politics of Europe and of England the study of her life—is it not natural that the accumulated experience of such a monarch day by day increases the authority, and therefore the control, which she exercises over the affairs of the country?

I say, is it not a benefit? I join issue with those who would say that the Queen has ever attempted to exceed the legitimate authority of a legitimate constitutional monarch—(cheers)—and I am bound to say that it was only in deference to the views of my friend in the chair and some others, that instead of voting for—as I really think I ought to have voted—I voted against conferring upon the Queen the title of Empress. I thought the title of Queen of England was enough for my love and my affection and loyalty; at the same time I was not aware that the father of the son-in-law of the Queen had entitled her Majesty Empress long before—that before the Act of Parliament was introduced for that purpose he had taken upon himself to do it—autocratically. (Cheers.)

But, gentlemen, we are happy in our Queen, because she is our Queen, and because she is a good woman, and a most constitutional Sovereign. She presides over an empire such as the world has probably never seen. Long may she receive, as she deserves, our loyalty and our affection, and long may she find this country free for every class and every sect in it, and therefore powerful wherever liberty can be learned and respected. A great American orator, describing our country of the last century, said, that it was an empire to which the fabled glories of Egypt, of Greece, and of Rome, were beneath comparison; that dotted around the world were her military posts, so that following the sun, and keeping company with the hours, the whole earth was encircled daily with one continuous sound of England's martial music. (Cheers.)

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that, in the advancing tide of opinion and of progress,—with the increase of those ennobling and softening influences which, from the pulpit, the school, and the press, have now for so many years been growing amongst us,—we may in the future, while not at all ignoring that portrait of her former greatness, be justified in the prayer and in the hope as regards this Empire, that as the morning sun breaks upon the horizon, in every country and every clime, it may be welcomed by the sound of prayer and praise from all mankind, in the grand old English language of this home of freedom. (Loud cheers.)

THE MAYOR (J. Holden, Esq.): After the speech we have listened to, I daresay there is something more to be said; and

when it is said, I am prepared to move a Resolution; or if no one else is desirous of speaking, I will at once move—

“That, in the opinion of this meeting, Sir Edward William Watkin
“is a fit and proper person to represent the borough of Hythe
“in the ensuing Parliament, and this meeting pledges itself to
“support his election whenever a dissolution may occur.”

(Loud cheers.)

Now, Mr. Chairman, we are all in a capital humour, and I do not want to spoil it. I should be sorry to say one word that would interfere with the harmony of this meeting. You know my motto is fair play for everybody, and I believe in fair discussion upon every subject that interests the mind of an Englishman. I never moved a resolution of a political character before, and how it is that I have strung up my nerves to be guilty of such an act of temerity to-night I do not know. I am not going to make a speech—I could do so if I felt disposed. (Laughter.) I will only occupy your time two or three minutes.

In moving this Resolution I feel that we are perfectly safe, and that we can trust our local, social, and business interests in the keeping of Sir Edward Watkin. (Cheers.) That is number one. I need not talk about it; you can digest it when you get home; you can pull it to pieces and put it together again, and when you have done that it will be just where you found it. (Laughter.) While Sir Edward Watkin was speaking I tried to put down two or three thoughts, but really he carried me along with him so thoroughly that I could not for the life of me do so. I wrote down, “Man all round—angular—confidence—look back upon his parentage—four generations of liberals.”

Now if that is anything like a logical speech, or a text for one, tell me. I never knew that Sir Edward was such a fighting-man as he is. I certainly was not prepared to go with him when he talked about hanging up the Ameer of Afghanistan and all those wicked fellows as high as Haman. I certainly should hesitate before I undertook that piece of business. (Laughter.) When he talked about the annihilation of those Zulu hosts, I fancied I could see old Cetewayo on the bottom of the Transvaal, and Sekukuni on the top of the Transvaal, with their murderous intentions to crush out every Boer. That knocked my speech out of my head. (Laughter.)

Nevertheless, Mr. Chairman and fellow-townsmen, if we

want a man to do anything for us, let him have our confidence. (Hear, hear.) We might have a one-sided man, we might have a man full of angles and crochets, and ideas of his own that might correspond with the ideas of half-a-dozen people in this street, and one in another, and two up yonder, and six down there; but that is not what we want. We do not want a delegate—a man that is to be pinned fast and close all round; wrapped up in swaddling clothes, so that he cannot move hand or limb; kept in one shape and attitude, and one form of speech. We do not want a man like that. If you asked me to do a thing for you, I should say, tell me what you want me to do, and I will do it to the best of my ability; but if a certain thing should arise in the course of the proceeding, give me a little discretion. If you want me to do anything, trust me; do not question my motives. Question my acts, if you like; but when you question them, I will tell you why I did so and so. Judge a man by what you see, and if he is fair all round, take him as he is. I feel as an Englishman—I feel as an inhabitant of Folkestone, and I feel as a member of the Liberal party, having been a liberal ever since I knew the meaning of the word, and I hope I shall continue to be so—that I can confidently trust my civil, my religious and my commercial interests in the keeping of a man like Sir Edward Watkin. (Cheers).

I do not approve of all that the present Government have done in their foreign policy—he does not himself, he told you so plainly—but there have been certain periods in the history of this country when loyal Englishmen have been compelled to go with the Government. (Hear, hear.) How was it that less than 100 Liberal members went into the lobby upon the vote for the six millions credit after those wonderful speeches condemnatory of the policy of the Tory Government? The honour of England was at stake, and they refused to oppose the Government just at that critical time. (“Hear, hear,” and cheers.)

I did not mean to say that, but somehow or another it has wormed itself out. I feel the greatest confidence—I do not please everybody, and I cannot expect to do so—in moving this Resolution. (Cheers.)

Mr. COBAY: I beg leave to second the motion. It is not necessary to occupy your time in speaking upon it, because everything that I could say myself has been already said. I

endorse all the sentiments that have been uttered by the worthy Mayor of Folkestone, and I cannot say anything more.

The Rev. WILLIAM SAMPSON: Before that Resolution is put to the Meeting, I ask your permission to say a word or two in opposition to it. Permit me to say I have never stood upon this platform before with such regret as I stand here to-night. If I could reconcile it with my conviction and duty to be silent, very gladly would I be silent. I want for a moment to refer to the remarks our Member was making when I ventured to interrupt him just now on a personal explanation—I am very careful, if I have anything to do with controversy, that no one could charge me with saying or doing anything that could be considered ungentlemanly. I ventured to write to the papers—which I had a perfect right to do—criticizing the speeches of Sir Edward Watkin delivered here and at Hythe. In those speeches Sir Edward Watkin took credit to himself for his courage and for his honesty. I said I did not question his courage. I will quote my exact words: “I recognize his courage in doing so; I should consider it an insult to him if I were to say that I acknowledged his honesty.” Gentlemen, if I were to look into any man’s face and say, “I consider you an honest man,” would he not suppose I was insulting him? Of course, Sir Edward is an honest man, and I am not here to-night to say one single word against the honesty and the courage with which Sir Edward Watkin has always acted. I acknowledge it, and I fully accede to what the Mayor has just said, and to what Sir Edward Watkin has also said. I will be no party to sending to Parliament a mere delegate, who shall vote exactly as the constituency tells him to do; I will only be a party to send a representative to Parliament who shall vote according to his convictions. Every man in the House of Commons ought to vote according to his convictions, and it will be a sad day when our members of Parliament do not vote according to their convictions. Sir, I admire the independence of members of Parliament; but while I acknowledge that they have a perfect right to be independent, I claim the same independence for myself and for the constituency to which I belong. (Hear, hear.) While a member in the House of Commons ought to vote according to his convictions, it is the duty of the constituency to consider whether the votes he gives are those which in their judgment are right or wrong. (Cries of “Question.”) That is the question,

and because I am going to challenge Sir Edward Watkin's votes, and his conduct in the House of Commons in so voting, or in not voting; I mean to oppose the resolution which has been submitted to us to-night. (Cheers and hisses.) Now, gentlemen, Sir Edward has referred to the Zulu War. I pass over, with a single expression of regret, the circumstance that he should condescend to use the terms he has used in describing those who have opposed him—"That kindly man, Cetewayo," "That man with such good intentions." I say it is a pity that Sir Edward Watkin should have condescended to use such terms as those. "An innocent black gentleman"—that is what Sir Edward Watkin says we call him—"an innocent black gentleman, who never did any harm." Now, I have never referred to Cetewayo in any such terms as those. (A Voice: "The party has.") I never heard of any of the Liberal party that have done it, and I will challenge any one to produce statements made by men who are fairly called representatives of the Liberal party to that effect. (Cheers.) Now, gentlemen, in reference to the Zulu War, and the long description of the causes of it that Sir Edward Watkin has given, there is an entire answer. This Government of ours, this Conservative Government, who sent out Sir Bartle Frere, and who received his despatch announcing that he had sent an ultimatum, and who waited until Sir Bartle Frere had sent a fuller explanation before they gave any expression of their own opinion—this Government said that the war was an unnecessary one. Now, gentlemen, I take my stand there. I won't go into particular details about Zululand, or refer to what Sir Edward Watkin has said to us in reference to Bishop Colenso, or in reference to anyone else. I take my stand there. This Government declared that Sir Bartle Frere was not justified in sending that ultimatum. I do not know how that fact can be got over. It must have been known to Sir Edward, but he did not refer to it in his speeches here before, and he has not referred to it to-night. Well, gentlemen, I say that a Government that permits one of its officers to continue in office after he has commenced what they think and have said is an unjust and unnecessary war—that Government ought not to have the confidence of the Liberal party of this country. Now, that resolution that Sir Charles Dilke moved with reference to the Zulu war was accepted by both parties—Sir

Stafford Northcote on the part of the Government, and the Marquis of Hartington on the part of the Opposition—as a vote of want of confidence in the Government; and to my regret Sir Edward Watkin gave a vote which was accepted as a vote of confidence in the Conservative Government. (Cheers and hisses.) I am not surprised, gentlemen, to hear a great deal of applause here. I am very much gratified to find how many conservative gentlemen have been converted to the liberal party. (Laughter.) I only hope they will prove true converts, and we will welcome back repentant sinners to-night, although we might find ninety-nine not “other sinners,” but “righteous men who do not think that they need repentance.”

Now, one word about the Afghan War. I only wish I had a large map here, and that I had the graphic powers shown by Sir Edward Watkin when he described Zululand, just to describe the Afghanistan territory and the territory round about it. I want to know what in the world the statement of Sir Edward Watkin about the greatness of India and the benefit of the English rule in India had to do with the question at issue. At one time I thought I was at a missionary meeting. I have often talked about Sutteeism and about infanticide and Juggernaut. I have been there, and I have stood at the very spot where the people have been crushed under the Juggernaut wheels, but I could not understand what all that had to do with the question at issue. What business have we in Afghanistan at all? (Hear, hear.) [A Voice: “Russia.”] The question is not shall we keep India, or give up India? We all say and we all mean to keep India—(A Voice: “Keep Russia out.”)—and as long as we do our duty to India and maintain as our standard there the great principles of righteousness and truth, so long we shall hold India; and, depend upon it, if we give up those great principles of righteousness and truth, and go into the gunpowder and glory business, our hold on India will be slackened, and India will be taken from us. (A Voice: “Never.”) It is because I believe all that, that I feel this matter so strongly. We had no business in Afghanistan at all. (A Voice: “Then we ought to let Russia go.”) Our friend says, we ought to let Russia go. Now, if Russia was attempting unfairly and unduly to get into Afghanistan, with whom ought we to have a quarrel? Ought we to have it with Afghanistan, or ought we to have it with Russia? (Hear, hear.) To talk about being afraid of Russia

getting into our dominions in India, why do, as Lord Salisbury told you to do the other day, study a good large map, and the very appearance of the map will show you that you need not fear Russia getting into India for many a long year to come. The fact is, our power is spreading in one direction and the power of Russia is spreading in another, and there are great distances of very difficult country to get over before you can join the two growths together. If you will only watch the progress that Russia has been making in Central Asia you will find that she is keeping right away to a great distance from our northern frontier; but even if we were to be afraid of Russia we are only playing into the hands of Russia in going into Afghanistan at all. The great policy was the policy of Lord Lawrence, Lord Mayo, and Lord Northbrook, to keep Afghanistan as a strong, friendly, independent power. But what have we done now? Judge of the tree by its fruits. You have made Afghanistan, not friendly, not merely a passive enemy; you have made Afghanistan for generations to come an active enemy to the British power. (No, no.) You will find it, yes. (Cheers and hisses.) Instead of our going to meet Russia in that direction, we should have waited to let Russia come into Afghanistan, and she would have had the opposition of all the tribes of Afghanistan to meet (No, no); instead of which we have made Afghanistan our enemy. That is the question; and when I find a Government proclaiming war as they did—forcing war as they did upon the Ameer of Afghanistan—I feel that they are undeserving our confidence. Now, gentlemen, I won't trouble you with going at length into the question of the Eastern policy; but I want to say one word on this point. It is commonly said: "Oh, Sir Edward is only in favour of the Government on foreign policy, and foreign policy ought to be beyond the range of party politics." Ay, ay; but since when has that been an admitted principle? Before this Government came into power the men who are now the leaders of the Government—the mainsprings of the Government—were the loudest in denouncing the foreign policy of their predecessors. They never accepted the principle that foreign politics are outside the range of party politics; they are too astute men to do that; and they only raise the question now in order to prevent the fair and honest criticism which the people of this country could give to their policy.

Now, suppose that Sir Edward has only voted with the Government on foreign policy — only the foreign policy — what does that mean? It is the question of peace and war; it is the question of increased expenditure; it is the question of taking away the bone and sinew of the country to fight the battles of the country. And mark me, I fully believe if this Government be returned to power again—(A Voice: "They will").—Is this a Liberal meeting? Is it a Liberal that shouts out, "They will?" (A Voice: "Yes.") I should like that Liberal to stand up. I know that some who have shouted out "They will" are men who have been the strongest upholders of the Conservative party in this Borough for years past. I know them; but mark me, if this Government is returned to power again, I do not believe it is possible for us to escape war with Russia. (A Voice: "We don't want to.") If you are one of the Liberals that "don't want to," then send into Parliament a gentleman who will support this present Conservative Government. Foreign policy only, what does it mean? It means the welfare and happiness of this people. It means the true honour of England, and because I believe that that honour has been trailed in the dust—(Cheers, and cries of "No, no.")—I believe it, gentlemen; and you cannot challenge me. Now I ask you another question. Is it only the foreign policy on which Sir Edward has voted for the Conservative Government, or not voted with his own party? Refer to the votes. On the County Franchise Bill Sir Edward Watkin has been silent since 1875—(Oh, oh!)—and to-night he justifies that vote, or that not vote, by saying that he is not prepared to give hovel franchise. (Hear, hear.) I am not surprised to hear that "Hear, hear;" but I ask gentlemen to listen for a moment. If a man in Folkestone lived in a hovel he would have a vote, and if he lived in a hovel outside the limits of the borough, why should he not have a vote as well? Talk about hovel suffrage, let these men have the vote, and the probability is that they will have the hope inspired in them which has been driven out of them by long centuries of legislation that has trampled them to the dust; and I say that one of the most effective means of raising them from that condition is giving them the franchise. But most assuredly when a man has a vote for a hovel in Folkestone, there can be no reason for his not having a vote because he lives in a hovel

outside Folkestone. Well, gentlemen, on many other questions besides, Sir Edward Watkin has not voted on home matters with the Liberal party. I know that there are on these questions one and another who have voted against their party. Mr. Cowen voted against his party on the Eastern question; he votes with his party on the Zulu war and the Afghan war, and on all those questions that affect home matters. Mr. Goschen does not vote with his party on the County Franchise Bill; he votes with them on all these other questions where Sir Edward has forsaken them. And we find not that Sir Edward has merely refrained from voting on the foreign policy and on one or two matters of home politics; but on a great many other questions. I feel therefore that I am bound to withhold my vote from him. [A Voice: "You are only one."] Yes, I am but one, and our friend who shouts is but one, too. (Laughter.) Gentlemen, believe me when I say that I have never taken up a public matter with so great regret as this; but believing that England has been dishonoured by this Government—"Oh! oh!"—having no confidence whatever in the present Government—and if time permitted I would bring forward evidence that I think would convince you that they are a Government in whom we ought not to have confidence—I can be no party to sending any man to Parliament who will not do his very utmost to hurl from power the Government that has been misusing it and degrading England for so many years past.

The CHAIRMAN: Does any other gentleman wish to speak against the Resolution?

After a pause,

Sir EDWARD WATKIN said: Well, gentlemen, as I have no other accuser, I will say a word or two (feeling myself to some extent in the dock) in reply to the accusation which has been brought against me. I think you will observe that my reverend friend has rather been attacking her Majesty's Government than attacking me. (Hear, hear.) Upon some questions I have no doubt that I shall be ready to join with him in attacking her Majesty's Government. But I want to know, Who was it that placed her Majesty's Government in power? Now, there is a gentleman whose radical proclivities and Nonconformist faithfulness will, I am sure, be entirely accepted by my reverend friend. I mean Mr. Samuel Morley.

Well, Mr. Samuel Morley said at a public meeting in London, that the reason why Lord Beaconsfield was placed in power, and that Mr. Gladstone was kicked out of power, was because of these internecine divisions caused in different Liberal constituencies, where in seventy-five cases two Liberals started against one Conservative. Now, I venture to say as my opinion—and I do not care whom I vex or whom I please by saying it—that the same intolerant game is to be played again, and that if you want to turn out her Majesty's Government you must rather rely upon Liberals of forty-four years standing like myself—upon Liberals who have fought the battle and borne the heat and burden of the day—than upon those men on whom we have conferred equality and enfranchisement, and who, alas, reward us by their opposition and their hatred. Now, we will come to particulars. My friend Mr. Sampson says that the issues have been those of peace or war. I admit it, and I justify my votes by expressing the most confident opinion—and I am sure every one of you who will read all the papers and study the question carefully—which evidently Mr. Sampson has not—will come to that opinion, that the votes which I have given have been in favour of peace, because they prevented those wars that come from weakness and indecision. Now, I will ask a few questions. I asked whether my friend was willing to give up India. He says, No. Very well; if he is not prepared to give up India, what is the best way of defending India? "Oh," he says, "you have no business in Afghanistan," but he forgets that we have the most complete and conclusive evidence that preparation was made in Afghanistan for attack upon India. (No, no; Yes, yes, and interruption.) Now, gentlemen, let us just try to be fair. I say you have the distinct and unmistakeable evidence of Sir Frederick Roberts against the mere assertion of Mr. Sampson.

MR. SAMPSON: No, you have not.

SIR E. WATKIN: There is not the slightest doubt, and I am sure Mr. Sampson will not contradict the extracts I read from Sir Frederick Roberts' despatch—that there was an enormous accumulation of military means at Cabul which could only be used and only be intended for an attack upon India. (No, no.) What is the use of denying it? Well, if that is so—and it all depends upon facts

which every one of you can prove or disprove for yourselves—if there was a vast military accumulation at Cabul—within four weeks' march of the frontiers of India—what was our best course to take? Were we to allow those cockatrices' eggs to mature into destruction for us, or to go there and crush them? "Oh," says Mr. Sampson, "if you were afraid of Russia, why didn't you go to war with Russia?" Now, I ask Mr. Sampson to get up and tell me, was he in favour of going to war with Russia? (Loud cheers.)

MR. SAMPSON: I rise at Sir Edward's request to answer his question. The question is an utterly unfair one. My statement is this: If you have cause of war against Russia, go to war with Russia, and not with Afghanistan. And, gentlemen, please take notice of it; I have never said that we have cause for war with Russia; but if we have the cause, then I will give the answer: but, don't you, gentlemen, have dust thrown in your eyes in that way.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN: Now gentlemen, I am going to follow this thing up. (Hear, hear.) If you have a little patience I am going to have it deliberately out. Either we had cause of war, or difference at all events with somebody, or we had cause of difference with nobody. It is very ingenious of my reverend friend. Either we had cause of quarrel or we had not. Now on what information are we to rely? Are we to rely upon the *ipse dixit* of Mr. Sampson, or upon my *ipse dixit*, or upon unmistakeable official documents? I read to you one of them.

MR. SAMPSON: What is the date of it? I know it.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN: Mr. Sampson says he knows it.

MR. SAMPSON: I do know it. It is Sir Frederick Roberts' despatch, written after all the war in Afghanistan, only a few weeks ago. Now, we know well enough that all those native princes in India have great stores of ammunition; it is part of their pride to have them. (Oh, oh!) You may say "Oh, oh," but it is true. It is part of their pride to have them. But our Government did not know this until Sir Frederick Roberts wrote his despatch. If Sir Edward says that they did know it, I will ask him for his authority. The Government has never put this matter forward in this way until Sir

Frederick Roberts' despatch arrived, and you cannot justify by evidence found out afterwards what you did months before. (Hear, hear.)

Sir EDWARD WATKIN: I should like to keep my friend to the point if I can. He tells you that Sir Frederick Roberts wrote this despatch, making these statements, after a certain stage of the war. Now, can we any of us believe that the Government were not aware of the information which was confirmed by what Sir Frederick Roberts sent to them? Can one for a moment believe that a body of Englishmen—not blood-thirsty men, not men disposed to "Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war," who had the great weight over them of English public opinion—would have engaged in that war if they did not know that there was a danger? When I ask upon what authority Mr. Sampson states that there was no such information until Sir Frederick Roberts' despatch arrived, he asks me to state on what authority I say there was such information. I can only say that either he knows there was no such information, or he does not. If he does not know, he ought to have informed himself before coming to accuse me of high crimes and misdemeanors for considering that the Government did know it. I will leave that for a moment, and focus the matter in this way. Mr. Sampson says he would not give up India. I understand him to admit that the English domination in India is a civilizing and elevating influence, and that we should be not only doing wrong, but committing a crime and omitting a duty if we gave up India. Mr. Sampson is kind enough to assent to that proposition. Then, I say, that if the Government of England have gone to war unwisely, cruelly, and wrongly, I should join Mr. Sampson in condemning them; but, according to the information given to me, which is patent to everybody, and which comes from the highest authority, there was a distinct danger—there was a collection of forces in Cabul which would have exploded in an invasion of India, or would have led to irritation after irritation until that alternative which Mr. Sampson himself has suggested (not, I am sure, that he wishes it) would have arisen, and we should have been obliged to declare war, not in India—but against Russia. Suppose there are three people in a quarrel, and there is an intermediate man, what is the best course to

pursue? Is it best to leave the intermediate man to join one side or the other, or to go to the intermediate man and settle with him first? At all events, I say we are quite right in endeavouring to prevent an invasion or a hostile demonstration against India, in Cabul. Remember there are 70,000 or 80,000 white men governing 200 million Hindoos, Mahomedans and others in India, and the moment your prestige is weakened, your power is gone, and you will have to regain it by a bloody war and an enormous expenditure. (Cheers.) I said two or three months ago, that war was so dreadful and so bad, that whenever a Government engaged in it, it ought to show cause why it did so. I am bound to say with regard to Afghanistan that the despatch of Sir Frederick Roberts to my mind shows that there was a justification. With regard to the Zulu war, Mr. Sampson has taunted me for having spoken in certain terms of Cetewayo. I hold in my hand the answer of Cetewayo to the ultimatum sent to him by our Government. The king said in reply to our envoy, "Did I ever tell Mr. Shepstone I would not kill? Did he tell the white people that I made such an arrangement; because if he did he has deceived them? I do kill, but do not consider that I have done anything yet in the way of killing. Why do the white people start at nothing; I have not yet begun. I have yet to kill; it is the custom of our nation, and I shall not depart from it."

Now, gentlemen, I want to know whether any Christian person will say that if that was the religion, the doctrine, the practice of this savage person, with his thirty or forty thousand armed men there, like a wedge between two portions of the country inhabited by white settlers, we should tolerate that sort of thing or not: that is my answer with regard to that point. I am bound to say, coming back to the Afghan business for a moment, that I entirely object to the idea that there should be between India and Russia a neutral zone. I say it is impossible. I say it is provocative of war. I say the proper course is to agree with Russia, and I think if our Government are wise and capable and able they might take advantage of this particular position of doubt and difficulty in Russia to make such an arrangement. They ought to agree to a frontier line in central Asia and get rid of all these doubts, difficulties, and struggles. Therefore, while I am prepared, as I always have been, to assert the

power and might of England in a just cause and to avoid wars by a firm attitude, I am always prepared, and shall be prepared, to recommend those negotiations which ought, if possible, to put an end to internecine struggles of Europe in arms which delay the progress of civilization and threaten human liberty. (Cheers.)

The MAYOR: Before this Resolution is put I claim the right to reply. Let me ask you not to run on side lines. The resolution does not approve of a Tory Government, and it does not pledge us to support a Tory Government. It pledges us to support a man whose whole life— (A Voice: "You are a Tory.") I challenge the truth of that. Our friend has made a mistake. Facts and figures are very stubborn things, and we cannot deny the statement made by our friend to-night, that his whole family for four generations have voted on the Liberal side. (Interruption.) He tells you that the course he has pursued and the course he will pursue is in the Liberal interest of this country—the civil, religious, and commercial freedom of Englishmen. The Resolution is a fair and open one: it asks for your cordial vote, and you will give it.

Mr. JOHN CLARKE: I beg to move an amendment. I agree that Sir Edward Watkins' hands ought not to be tied, and that he should say what he likes when he gets into the House of Commons; but we ought to have the same privilege ourselves. I am one who disagrees with Sir Edward Watkins' votes on the foreign policy of this country; and I beg leave to move as an amendment—

"That the votes which Sir Edward Watkin has given on the foreign
"policy of the present Government are not in accordance with
"the majority of the Liberals of this borough."

(Hear, hear. Cheers and groans.)

The CHAIRMAN: Does any gentleman second the amendment? (A Voice: Will you read the amendment?)

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment is not written.

The MAYOR: While they are writing out the amendment, let me say—

The CHAIRMAN: It has been suggested to me—and I think the suggestion is a very good one—that this is not an amend-

ment, but a motion, which may be put as a separate motion afterwards; but it is not an amendment to this motion.

The MAYOR: Let us be fair with each other. I tell you honestly that I can vote with the amendment. What position are you putting me in? I shall vote for my resolution, most decidedly, but you will be dividing to-night with that amendment on wrong issues. ("Oh, oh.") Yes, you will. I say it, and I maintain it, and I am ready to prove it, that the majority of the Liberal party in Folkestone are prepared to support Sir Edward Watkin (loud cheers); and I say still further, that the majority of the Liberal party in Folkestone do not approve of the Tory Government.

Mr. W. H. WILLIS: I think that this is putting matters upon a false issue. I stand here to-night fully prepared, after all I have heard from Sir Edward Watkin, to stand by his side and to give him my vote; but I am not prepared to say that I endorse the foreign policy of the Government. Well, look at the position you are in. If Mr. Clarke's motion is lost our vote for Sir Edward Watkin will be not merely a vote of confidence in Sir Edward Watkin, but it will be a vote of confidence in her Majesty's Government. Now, we profess to be here to-night as a meeting of Liberals. I daresay there are others who do not profess to be Liberals. Now, it is a great pity, brother electors, that you should divide the Liberal camp. I for one would scout the idea of returning a man who should be a mere delegate. As a member of the Folkestone Corporation I would never be returned or sit in the Corporation, if I was bound and tied and fettered to carry out certain purposes. Those who return me to the Corporation ought to have confidence in me, as I have confidence in Sir Edward Watkin. I do hope that our Chairman will rule that this matter is out of order. I have no objection to a vote being taken afterwards; I will hold up my hand for it; but what I feel is this—I should deeply deplore the party being divided. Do you not know that Liberal division is Conservative opportunity? (Cheers.) What I feel about the matter is this: We cannot see every thing alike. Sir Edward Watkin may have had more information upon these subjects than you and I have. I believe that he has acted without fear, favour, or affection, and that he has given his votes in the House of Commons faithfully and

conscientiously ; nevertheless, I differ on that point, and he and a great many of his constituents differ on that point. Therefore, I think it would be better if you could put this motion afterwards. I do not think it is an amendment to the motion. The motion does not say a word as to the foreign policy of Sir Edward Watkin at all. It very wisely, as I think, leaves the whole question ; and looking at what Sir Edward Watkin is and what he has done, and what he is prepared to do, and looking at the way in which he has always supported Liberal opinions, it declares that this meeting deems him worthy of its support.

The CHAIRMAN : I rule that the amendment is out of order.

Mr. CLARKE : As the Chairman rules that this is out of order I will waive it now, and I will move it afterwards.

A show of hands was then taken, and

The CHAIRMAN said, I declare this resolution carried by an overwhelming majority. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. CLARKE : I beg to move " That the votes given by Sir Edward Watkin on the Foreign Policy of the Government are not in accordance with the opinions of the majority of the Liberals of this borough."

Mr. SAMPSON : I second the motion.

A show of hands was then taken, and the motion was rejected by a large majority.

Alderman SHERWOOD : I beg to move a vote of thanks to our worthy Chairman, Dr. Bateman, for so ably conducting this evening's meeting.

The motion was seconded, and carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN : I beg to thank you for your vote of thanks, and for the orderly manner in which you have behaved to-night. Although we have had some exciting topics, I am sure that the meeting has been most orderly.